

## **An Analysis of Themes in “The Magic” and Its Indonesian Translation (A Systemic Functional Grammar Approach)**

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The present study entitled *An Analysis of Themes in “The Magic” and Its Indonesian Translation (A Systemic Functional Grammar Approach)* aims to find out the types of Theme in the original version and the translated version of *The Magic*, and Themes realization in the Indonesian translated version. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method. The present study adopted Halliday’s (1994) theory of Systemic Functional Grammar as a tool of analysis to analyze the Themes used in the texts, and Eggins’ (2004) theory of thematic progression. The study finds three types of Theme both in the source and in the target text; Topical Theme, Textual Theme and Interpersonal Theme. The study also finds four patterns of Theme realization in the Indonesian translation of *The Magic*. The first pattern the Themes are translated like the original. The second pattern, part of the Theme is ellipted. The third pattern, there are some words from Rheme translated as Theme. The last, the Themes are shifted in the process of translation.

**Keywords:** *Theme, Rheme, Translation, Systemic Functional Grammar*

## INTRODUCTION

Misunderstanding can happen when people communicate with each other especially when they are using different languages, both when they communicate orally and communicate through written media, such as books, documents, letters, etc. As one of the ways to reduce misunderstanding in communication especially in written media, people often translate the texts from one language to another language. Translation can be understood as a process of turning a text from source language into a target text in different languages (Munday, 2004). In relation to this, Newmark (1988, p.7) defines translation as a craft that is replacing a written message in one language by same message into another language. For Hatim (2001, p.10), translating is “a multi-faceted activity, and there is room for a variety of perspectives.”

Leaning on Hatim’s idea, we can see that translation involves other disciplinaries, such as psychology, linguistics, literary studies, socio cultural studies, philosophy, etc. In the context of

analyzing translation results, linguistics, especially Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) can serve as a good tool. Taylor (1987) said that SFG helps divide the flow of discourse into lexicogrammar units, which are more translatable. Through this, translators can identify kinds of meaning in the text and translate the text more accurately.

Studies that have investigated translation works using SFG as a tool, include Mason (2010) who analysed Spanish text and English translation text. In the study, theme is an element of the texts which was analyzed. Some themes are found to be transformed in the target texts. This becomes the evidence of a translator who gives his own idea to the text. Another study was conducted by Sjalilifar and Khedri (2011) who investigate thematic progression in English texts and Perisan translation texts. In their study, Halliday’s theory of Systemic Functional Grammar and Mc’Cabe’s thematic progression were used. Their study finds that there are significant differences found in the translation version. Another study

was conducted by Aghagolzadeh and Farazandeh-pour in 2012. The study investigated errors in translation of legal documents from English to Persian. The translated texts were analyzed at sentence level based on Systemic Functional Grammar theory. The result shows that SFG can be used as an appropriate tool in making translation texts more appropriate and accurate. Their study also shows us that SFG can be a useful tool in evaluating students' translation abilities objectively. There have been a number of studies using Theme system theory, but studies of Theme system in translation text are rare.

This present study investigates themes in a translated book entitled *The Magic* written by Rhonda Bryne (2012). The study uses theme-rheme theory of Systemic Functional Grammar to compare the theme of the original version and the translated version.

## THEME AND RHEME

Theme is an element which serves as the main topic or point of departure of a message (Halliday, 1985, 1994;

Martin 1995; Eggins 2004; Bloor, 2004). As the starting point, Theme is followed by Rheme and put in the beginning of a clause. In this kind of position, which is familiar, Theme also contains typical information which is familiar and has already known or information that has been mentioned. It is an element the speaker selects for grounding what he/she is going to say. Theme is the first element in the clause.

Theme is divided into 3 types; ideational or topical Theme, interpersonal Theme and textual Theme relevant to the metafunction of language (Halliday, 1994; Emilia, 2014). These Themes will be described as follows.

### a. Ideational or Topical Theme

Ideational or topical Theme is usually the first nominal group in a clause. It also works for nominal group complexes, adverbial groups, and prepositional phrases or embedded clause. Eggins (2004, p.302) emphasizes that every clause must contain one and only one topical Theme. After the topical Theme is identified, we can consign the remaining part as Rheme.

Therefore, if some elements are found in a clause before the topical Theme, it is also a thematic element.

b. Interpersonal Theme

Interpersonal Theme is an interpersonal element which occurs before a topical Theme. Interpersonal Theme may be in the form of mood adjuncts, vocatives, finite or Wh-elements. Interpersonal theme also indicates “the kind of interaction taking place, and the point of view of those interacting” (Emilia, 2014, p.204).

c. Textual Theme

Textual Theme relates the clause to its context. Textual Theme may be in the form of continuatives and/or Conjunctive adjunct and conjunctions.

Rheme is placed after Theme and the elements of a clause in which the Theme is developed. The Rheme contains new information which is unfamiliar. To identify a Rheme in a clause, we have to identify the Theme of the clause first. It is because the Rheme is the remaining part of the clause which is not the Theme.

## TRANSLATION

There are numbers of translation definitions made by the experts. In this part, some of definitions are going to be described in order to clarify how translation may be understood. Bassnet (1980, p.2) states, “translation involves the rendering of the SL text into the TL as to ensure that the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but no so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted.”

Some points in this definition are also emphasized by Newmark (1988) in his definition of translation; that in a translation, the message in the source text and the message in the target text should be the same. Thus, translation changes a text into another language but the meaning should be maintained.

Translation process is a process of reproducing the meaning in the source texts into target texts which have equivalent meanings and styles (Nida and Taber, 1974). This definition emphasizes some

important elements in the process of translating, which are reproducing the meaning, equivalency, meaning and style. The idea of their definition is shared in Catford's definition (1965, p.20) of translation: "the replacement of textual material in one language from equivalent textual material in another language."

A good translation makes the translators invisible and makes the reader read the translation texts as though they read the original one (Venuti, 1995, p.1). This clearly shows that the translation products should have the same meaning as the original ones. The translator cannot give their own opinion in the translation product. So, the reader of the translation product can read the translation as if they read the original text.

There are several criteria of good translation proposed by different linguists. Tytler (1970) and Foster (1958) agreed that a good translation should focus on the purpose, style, and the way of exposition of the original text. Venuti (1995) described that a good translation should make the

translators invisible and makes the readers read the translation work as if they read the original work. While, Barnwell (1983), Larson (1998), Newmark (1998), and Nida and Taber (1974) believe that a good translation work should have element of accuracy, clarity, and naturalness. In sum, a good translation should transfer not only the language but also the message in the original work, the style, the way of exposition of the message and the purpose of the texts without the translator giving their personal idea to the translation works. A good translation should also be as clear, as accurate, and as natural as possible that can make the reader read the translation works as if they read the original works.

All of the criteria above become the bases for translators to make a good translation work. There are a lot of studies conducted using linguistic theories to investigate and prove a good translation work. This theory is Systemic Functional Grammar, specifically Theme system. Theme system can have important role in making an accurate, natural and equivalent translation

work. Theme system is one theory which involves the arrangement of information between texts. This theory also determines the level of cohesiveness and coherence of a text. Baker (in Manfredi, 2012) states that in a translation process, a text cannot be treated as a single word but as an arrangement of words which creates information.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This present study employs a descriptive qualitative method as the research method. This method is used because it is relevant to the purposes of this study. The descriptive qualitative method is used as the research design in this study because this study is “in form of words and not numbers” (Nkwi, 2001; Creswell, 2003). This method is also relevant to this study because this study “explores, describes, and analyzed the data” (Arikunto, 1996; Maxwell, 1996) in a psychology book and its Indonesian translation version to find out kind of Theme, and the realization of Themes.

The data in this study are in the form of clauses which are

selected from *The Magic* and its Indonesian translated version. *The Magic* is written by Rhonda Bryne and published by Atria Books in 2012. This book was translated into Indonesian by Susi Purwoko and published by PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama in 2012. The original version contains 254 pages while the translated version has 280 pages.

In conducting the analysis the following steps have been taken:

Step 1. Reading the whole texts in order to see the themes in the whole text.

Step 2. Comparing the themes of the target text to the source text in order to see how the themes are realized in the target text.

Step 3. Selecting parts of the text to be analyzed. In this step, the parts of the texts taken are the third part and the fourth part. The title is *Bring the Magic into Your Life* and *Magical Book*. These parts are translated as *Mendatangkan Keajaiban ke Dalam Hidup Anda*, dan *Buku Ajaib*. These parts have been selected because the themes changed in those parts more than in the other parts.

Step 4. Breaking down the sample text into clauses. In the sample text, the sentences were in form of simple sentences, and complex sentences. In order to categorize the Theme, based on systemic functional grammar approach, the sentences were broken down into clauses.

Step 5. Categorizing the Theme of the clause into their Theme types; topical Theme, interpersonal Theme and textual Theme. In this step, Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1994) was used as the framework of analysis.

Step

6.

2a	I	have received letters from thousand
	Topical Theme	Rheme

The textual evidence above is the Topical Theme in the form of declarative clause. the Topical Theme of clause 2a only has a single Theme in the clause. The word "I" represents Topical Theme in the form of a nominal group. The word and phrase functioned as a participant and a subject in the clause which is placed in the beginning of the clauses. This is in line with

Comparing theme category of the original version of The Magic to the sample taken from the Indonesian translated version of The Magic.

Step 7. Identifying how the themes were realized in the translated version, and how the realization affects the translation work.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

All of the Theme types are found both in the original text and translated text as illustrated in the following evidence.

### 1. Topical Theme

Halliday (1994) who identifies Topical Theme as the first element in the clause. The element can be in the form of a nominal group, nominal group complexes, adverbial groups and prepositional phrases or embedded clause.

The Topical Theme is also found in the target text, as shown in the following illustration:

5b	mereka yang benar-benar miskin	menjadi makmur
	Topical Theme	Rheme

The phrase “*mereka yang benar-benar miskin*” in clause 5b is the Topical Theme. This phrase functions as the participant and subject in its clause and placed in the beginning of the text.

## 2. Interpersonal Theme

The following is the illustration of Textual Theme found in the source text:

6b	no matter what state	They	are in now
	Interpersonal Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

The textual evidence above represents the Interpersonal Theme in declarative clause. Just as explained before, the Interpersonal Theme is placed before the Topical Theme and may be in the form of mood adjunct, vocatives, finite or Wh-elements (Gerot and Wignell,

1994; Emilia, 2014). The phrase of “no matter what state” is the Interpersonal Themes which is also placed before the Topical Theme.

The Interpersonal Theme is also found in the target text as shown in the following clause:

32a	<i>Tentu saja</i>	<i>di berbagai saat,</i>	<i>dalam hidup anda pernah bersyukur</i>
	Interpersonal Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

The clause above is a declarative clause that has Interpersonal Theme. The Interpersonal Theme of clause 32a is a modal adjunct. The Interpersonal Theme presents the writer’s angle or

the writer’s comment on one thing, and also mostly found in the spoken text (Halliday, 1994). Interpersonal Theme is the least type of Theme found in the text. This might indicate



that the text is not written in the spoken way.

### 3. Textual Theme

3b	Where	there	seemed to be no hope.
	Textual Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

The clause above is a declarative clause. The clause has Textual Theme placed before the Topical Theme. Clause 3b has only one Textual Theme in each clause. The Textual Theme is a Wh-element

Here is the illustration of Textual Theme found in the source text:

and this element functions as a conjunction; the word “when” is considered as Textual Theme.

The Textual Themes are also found in the target text as illustrated below:

5c	Dan	saya	telah melihat
	Textual Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

The Textual Theme is placed before the Topical Theme. The words “dan” in clause 5c functions as a conjunction. This is relevant to what Eggins (2004) states that a Textual Theme can be in the form of conjunctive adjunct which also contains conjunctions.

Textual Themes are found more in number than Interpersonal Theme but less than Topical Theme. The most frequently used Textual Themes is conjunctive adjunct which relates the clause with the preceding text. This also indicates the

coherence of the text, as suggested by Halliday (1994).

After labeling the Themes in original and translated version of the book, the Themes are compared. The original version is the source text and the translated version is the target text. Based on the analysis, there are four patterns of translated Themes found. The first one is the Themes are translated just like the original version. The second pattern is the ellipted Themes are displayed in the target text or vice versa. The third is there are some words from rheme in the source text translated as Theme

in the target text. The last is the Themes are shifted in the process of translation.

1. The Themes in the source text are translated identically into the target text.

In this pattern, the thematic structure is remaining the same, and there is no different in meaning between the source text and the target text. The types of Theme and the meaning of Themes in source text are translated identically into the target text as illustrated below:

Source text	Target text
<u>You</u> will also learn how to practice gratitude to dissolve problems and transform any negative situations.	<u>Anda</u> juga akan mempelajari cara mempraktikkan syukur untuk mengatasi masalah dan megubah setiap situasi negatif.

The underlined part is the Theme of the clause. As we can see, the Themes of both texts are identical. The Theme in the source text is “You” which is a nominal group word. As has been explained before, Topical Theme is the first element of transitivity in the clause (Halliday 1994). In this case, the first transitivity element is the word “You” which functions as a participant. This Theme is translated

into “Anda” which is also a participant in the transitivity element and a nominal group word.

In this pattern, the theme is translated into equally or similar words or phrases with the same meaning and function. This type of pattern can be considered as a good translation because of the equivalent words or phrases that are used in the target text (Nida and Taber, 1974).

2. Ellipted Theme

Source Text	Target Text
Practicing gratitude in a concentrated effort over consecutive days guarantees <i>that you will see the magic take place in your life - and fast!</i>	Mempraktikkan syukur dengan konsentrasi penuh selama 28 hari berturut-turut akan memastikan <u>Anda</u> melihat keajaiban di dalam hidup Anda - dengan cepat!

The sentence above is taken from the second paragraph. The italicized clause is the clause that is the focus in this explanation. The underlined words are the Theme of the clause. The Theme in the source text is “that you”. Those words consist of Textual Theme and Topical Theme. The word “that” is a conjunction which is considered as a Textual Theme. The word “you” is a nominal group and analyzed as a Topical Theme. In contrary, the Theme of the target text is “*Anda*” which is identified as Topical Theme. In this case, the word “*bahwa*” which is supposed to be the translation of the Textual Theme “that” is ellipped. This ellipsis

does not cause the change of meaning, but makes the target text more natural. As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, not only accuracy but also naturalness are needed to make a good translation (Newmark, 1998). So, with this pattern the translated themes can be considered as a good translation product.

### 3. Theme taken from rheme

In this pattern, the target text has more types of Theme than the source text. This is caused by some elements in the Rheme of the source text that are taken as the Theme in the target text as supported by the following textual evidence:

Source text	Target Text
You will learn how to use gratitude's magical power to help other people, dissolve problems and improve any negative situation or circumstances <u>you may encounter throughout your life</u> .	Anda akan belajar menggunakan daya ajaib syukur untuk membantu orang lain, melenyapkan masalah, dan memperbaiki setiap situasi atau keadaan negatif <u>yang mungkin Anda temui sepanjang hidup</u> .

The Theme of the target text is “you”. This word is a nominal group and is also the first transitivity element in the clause. The word “you” is considered as the Topical Theme. While the source text only

has Topical Theme, the target text has more than one type of Theme; Textual, Interpersonal, Topical Theme. The Theme in the target text is “*yang mungkin Anda*”. The word “*yang*” is a conjunction and is

analyzed as a Textual Theme. The word “ *mungkin* ” is considered as an Interpersonal Theme because it is a modal adjunct that shows probability. The word “ *Anda* ” is a nominal Theme which is analyzed as Topical Theme. The word “ *mungkin* ” is a translation from the word “may” which is positioned as the rheme of the clause. In Indonesian grammar, modality is usually placed in the front of the subject (Samsuri, 1982). The Interpersonal text in the target text does not change the meaning. This means that the translator is trying to make the source text more natural in the target language so the structure in the target text follows the structure in target language. The addition of conjunction does not

change the meaning either because in target text the Textual Theme is ellipted.

In this pattern, a modal word in the target text is translated as modal adjunct which is placed before the Topical Theme. This pattern is formed because Indonesian grammar has different rules. As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, in the translating process, the translator should consider the source text grammar (Larson, 1984) to achieve a good translation process.

#### 4. Theme shift

In this pattern, the Themes are shifted in the process of translating as shown in the textual evidence below:

Source text	Target text
You can tell right now how much you have actually used gratitude in your life. <i>Just take a look at all of the major areas in your life; money, health, happiness, career, home, and relationships.</i>	Sekarang juga Anda bisa tahu seberapa banyak Anda telah menggunakan syukur di dalam hidup Anda. <i>Anda hanya perlu melihat area-area utama dalam hidup Anda: uang, kesehatan, kebahagiaan, karier, rumah, dan relasi.</i>

The sentences were taken from the fifth paragraph. The clause from the source text is an imperative clause but the clause in the target text

is a declarative clause. The Theme of target text is “Just take a look” which contains two types of Theme; Interpersonal and Topical Theme.

The Interpersonal Theme is realized by a word “just”. The Topical Theme is realized by a process in the transitivity element in “take a look”. This Topical Theme is a marked Topical Theme because it is a process. The target text has “Anda” as the Theme. This word is a nominal group and a participant in transitivity element, so it is considered as an unmarked Topical Theme. In this case, the Topical Theme in the source text is changed from marked Theme into unmarked Theme. Marked Theme functions as “a question of rejecting the default option” (Baker, 1992). This means that a marked Theme is supposed to be translated into a marked Theme in target language. However, in this case, the marked Theme is translated into unmarked Theme. The writer’s thematic choice is ignored and changed into “default” thematic structure. The Themes choices are

also determined by the mood of the clauses. Each type of mood has its typical Themes. Imperative clause is the only types of clause whose predicator is regularly found as a Theme (Halliday, 1994). In the other hands, in declarative clause, the typical Theme is the subject. So, the choice of mood will influence the Theme choice. Hence, in this case, the differences between the Theme in the source text and target text can be caused by different mood choice. However, the change of Theme does not ‘destroy’ the meaning of the clause because the Theme in the target text is derived from the Rheme in source text. Even though the thematic option is different, the Theme is translated in the rheme position. Thus, the meaning of the Theme in the source text is not changed.

Here is another illustration of theme shift:

Source text	Target text
You can be as specific and detailed as you like, <i>but remember your job is simply to list what you want</i> , not how you're going to get what you want. The "how" will be done for you when gratitude works its magic.	Kalau mau, Anda boleh menulis dengan spesifik dan terperinci, <i>tetapi tolong diingat bahwa tugas Anda</i> hanyalah menulis apa yang Anda inginkan, bukan cara mendapatkan apa yang Anda inginkan. "Cara" akan

	dilakukan untuk Anda ketika syukur sedang melakukan keajaibannya.
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The excerpt above is taken from the 29<sup>th</sup> paragraph. The translation in the target text shows different types of Theme. The Theme of the source is “but remember your job”. This Theme contains three types of Theme. The first Theme is Textual Theme which is realized in a conjunction word “but”. The second type is an Interpersonal Theme in the word “remember”. The last type is the Topical Theme which is presented in a nominal group. The Theme in target text is “*tetapi tolong diingat bahwa tugas Anda*”. This Theme also contains Textual Theme, Interpersonal Theme and Topical Theme. In this Theme, there are two Textual Themes found in conjunctions “*tetapi*” and “*bahwa*”. The Topical Theme is presented in nominal group “*tugas Anda*”. The Interpersonal Theme is “*tolong diingat*”. The word “*diingat*” is actually a translation of “remember”. However, the word “*tolong*” or “please” does not exist in the Interpersonal theme of the source text. The word “*tolong*” itself has

the same meaning and the same function as the word “please”; it is used in polite request (Supriatin, 2007). This might show the translator effort to make the target text more polite.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the text analysis, the research found three types of Theme in the Bryne’s book of *The Magic*, both in the original version and in the translation version. The types of Theme are Topical Theme, Textual Theme and Interpersonal Theme with Topical Theme dominates the number. The Theme found in source text, then compared to the Themes in the translated version in order to see the realization of Themes in the translation version. There are four patterns of translated Themes found. The first one is the Themes are translated just like the original version. The second pattern is the ellipted Themes are displayed in the target text or vice versa. The third is there are some words from rheme in the source text which are translated

as Theme in the target text. The last is the Themes are shifted in the process of translation. The theme shifts include the shift from marked theme to unmarked theme, and addition of interpersonal theme in the target text.

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